

LETTER

THE SECRETARY OF WAR,

FROM

TRANSMITTING

A letter of General Sheridan, president Board of Commissioners of Soldiers' Home, asking legislation to admit insane inmates of said Home to the Government Hospital for the Insane.

MAY 7, 1884.—Referred to the Committee on Military Affairs and ordered to be printed

WAR DEPARTMENT,
Washington City, May 6, 1884.

The Secretary of War has the honor to transmit, for the consideration of the Senate of the United States, the accompanying communication from Lieutenant-General Sheridan, president of the Board of Commissioners of the Soldiers' Home, requesting the necessary legislation to allow the admission of insane inmates of said Home to the Government Hospital for the Insane.

The admission of insane inmates of the National Home for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers to said hospital was authorized by the act of August 7, 1882 (22 Stat., page 330), and I recommend that the Soldiers' Home may receive the benefit of similar legislation.

ROBERT T. LINCOLN,
Secretary of War.

The PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE OF THE SENATE.

OFFICE OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
OF THE SOLDIERS' HOME, ROOM 3, WAR DEPARTMENT,
Washington, D. C., May 1, 1884.

SIR : Referring to the correspondence between the War Department and the Commissioners of the District of Columbia concerning the case of one William Brumby, an insane discharged soldier, who had been admitted to the Government Hospital for the Insane, District of Columbia, I have the honor to request, if in your judgment it may be proper, that you will transmit the accompanying copies of letters in the case to the chairman of the Committee on Appropriations, House of Representatives, and call his special attention to the recommendations contained in your last annual report and in that of the Commissioners of the Soldiers' Home (see pages 7 and 656, H. Ex. Doc. 1, Part 2, Forty-eighth Congress, first session), that the Soldiers' Home in the District of Columbia be allowed the same privilege of sending insane patients to the Government, Hospital for the Insane as has been authorized

by act approved August 7, 1882 (22 Stat. at L., page 330), for the National Soldiers' Home, from which all cases are received free of charge for support and treatment, while the Home in this District is required to pay for all cases in which the insanity does not appear within three years after the date of discharge from the Army.

The case of Brumby affords an excellent illustration of the operation of the law as it now stands and is applied to the admissions from the Home to the Insane Asylum. The man had not been in the military service for nearly twenty years ; had been an inmate of institutions for the insane in New York State, and had been an inmate also of the asylum in the District. On application for admission to the Soldiers' Home he was found entitled under the law. His history since his Army service was then unknown. No indication of insanity appeared at the time, at least to be noticeably one not experienced in such matters. The attending surgeon at the Home discovered the fact within twenty-four hours after his admission, and his transfer to the asylum was ordered, as is stated in the papers herewith, and the Home is required to pay for his support and treatment.

The object of the request made by this letter is to have the matter brought to the notice of the committee which has been mentioned, with a view to their making provision for the privilege sought in the proper appropriation bill, and it is hoped that it may be effected.

I am, sir, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

P. H. SHERIDAN,

Lieut. Gen'l Com'dg the Army,

President Board of Commissioners Soldiers' Home.

The Hon. SECRETARY OF WAR.

WAR DEPARTMENT,
Washington City, March 4, 1884

GENTLEMEN: I have the honor to inform you that upon the application of the governor of the United States Soldiers' Home, an order was given for the admission of William Brumby to the Government Hospital for the Insane, with the instructions that the House must pay for his keeping and treatment while in the hospital.

The Department is in receipt of a letter, dated the 25th ultimo, from the Commissioners of the Soldiers' Home, requesting that so much of the order referred to as requires the charges for the keeping and treatment of the said Brumby to be paid by the House be revoked.

The Commissioners of the House represent that Brumby applied on January 31, 1884, for admission to the Home, and on record of evidence of gunshot wound received in action disabling him for further service, and on which he receives a pension of \$12 per month, an order was made for his admission. On the morning of February 1, 1884, he reported at the hospital and was found by the attending surgeon to be insane, and the necessary steps were taken to send him to the Government Hospital for the Insane, which was done on the following day.

The Commissioners also state that in reply to an inquiry addressed to the superintendent of the Government Hospital for the Insane he reported that Brumby was an inmate under treatment at that asylum from August 23 until October 22, 1879, and had been an inmate of insane hospitals in the State of New York prior thereto. His admission to the Government Hospital for the Insane in 1879 was on the order of the Commissioners of the District of Columbia as a non-resident insane person.

In view of the facts as a above stated, and in accordance with the suggestion of the Adjutant-General of the Army, I beg to request that you will please direct that Brumby be admitted to the Government Hospital as an Insane non-resident pauper, under the provisions of section 4850 Revised Statutes, and that his pension of \$12 per month be applied as a portion of his expenses in the hospital, if this can be lawfully done.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

ROBERT T. LINCOLN,
Secretary of War.

The COMMISSIONERS OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA.

OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONERS, DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA,

Washington, April 10, 1884.

Sir: In response to your communication of the 4th ultimo, the Commissioners have to say they find no authority to make an order as suggested, except for the temporary purpose of ascertaining hence he came and who his friends are ; and there are already more cases of that kind than appropriation to pay for. It would seem that the *temporary* purpose is not what the case requires. Nor have the Commissioners authority to direct the application of the pension. They therefore submit that they should not act in the premises.

Very respectfully,

J. B. EDMONDS,
*Secretary.*Hon. ROBERT T. LINCOLN,
Secretary of War.

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